Export of Agricultural Products

1636. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra are undertaking a big programme for export of fruits, vegetables and agricultural products and have sought financial assistance in the form of transport subsidy and other help from the Central Government;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal made by the Government of Maharashtra;

(c) the reaction of Government thereto and commitment made so far; and

(d) the details of progress achieved by the State Governments in general and Maharashtra in particular in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (d) The State Government of Maharashtra recommended a proposal for sanction of financial assistance for setting up of a Grape Marketing & Export Project to be implemented by Mahagrapes on behalf of 15 Cooperative Marketing Societies during December, 1991. The proposal was considered by National Cooperative Development Corporation and a total assistance of Rs. 750 lakhs @ Rs. 50 lakhs to each society was approved during February 1992. Besides, an assistance of Rs. 11 lakhs towards training, extension and consultancy was approved as subsidy.

While the exports of agricultural products including fruits and vegetables have been estimated at Rs. 2742.85_x crores during the 1992 season, Mahagrapes have exported 1800 tonnes of fruits worth Rs. 5.06 crores.

Regional Trade Grouping

1637. SHRI P. UPENDRA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for a regional trade grouping for South Asian countries is not making progress as desired;

(b) if so what are the reasons for jeopardising the trade pact; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to get over the problem ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (c) Draft of a framework agreement for establishment of a SAARC preferential trading arrangement has been prepared in inter-governmental consultations. One country, however, is yet to indicate its acceptance of all provisions of the agreement. It also wishes to have a longer time frame for implementation than that wanted by other countries.

In SAARC all decisions are made unanimously, and each member-state acts in accordance with its interests.

Export of Chemical T.M.P. to Syria

1638. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether chemical T.M.P. was exported to Syria in violation of regulations during the last two years;

(b) if so, the quantity and value of exports made;

(c) whether any enquiry in the matter has been held and action taken against the persons found guilty; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) and (b) There were no regulations on the exportm of chemical T.M.P. till 29-6-1992. From 30-6-1992 onwards its export is being allowed on the basis of an 'NOC issued by the Administrative Ministry concerned. However, it was reported that M/s. United Phosphorous Ltd., Bombay had export-| ed 45 MTs of Trimethyl Phosphite ! (T.M.P.) for US $ 114750 to Syria in July, 1992, allegedly in violation of the Export Policy in force.

(c) Investigations are being conducted against the aforesaid firm for alleged unauthorised export of chemical T.M.P.

Pending investigations, the said firm has been placed under abeyance, prohibiting! the export of T.M.P. A show cause notice has been also issued to the aforesaid i firm/its directors contemplating to debar them from exporting any goods and/or from receiving any export licences and also to impose fiscal penalty on the allegation that they had exported T.M.P. in contravention of the Export Policy in force.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Expansion of Marketing Operations by MMTC

1639. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether MMTC is planning to expand its marketing operations due to decanalisation of non-ferrous metals and particulars alongwith their raw materials and intermediaries;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether any plan for expansion has been drawn ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (c) Consequent upon decanalisation of non-ferrous metals, fertilizer raw materials, fertilizer intermediates, etc. and resultant likely impact on its turnover, MMTC has identified new areas of activities in the fields of agro, marine, gems & jewellery, textiles, leather and chemicals for expansion of its marketing operations in addition to the existing lines of its activities such as minerals, metals, fertilizers etc.

1640. *[Transferred to 8th December,* 1992.]

Export Earnings

1641. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether export earnings of the, country have not caught up so far asl reported in the Economic Times of October 29, 1992;

(b) whether exports will take into account need for essential home supplies specially the traditional items such as fish, fruits & vegetables and animal feeds etc; and

(c) whether Government would, instead, concentrate on exports of non-traditional items such as mushrooms, flowers and other western style fruts and vegetables through, increased production/productivity?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) According to the provisional figures, India's exports during the first six months of the current financial year, i.e., April-September, 1992, amounted to US $ 8549 million (Rs. 24403 crores) as compared to US $ 8113 million (Rs. 18711 crores) thereby registering a growth of 5.4 per cent (in rupee terms, 30.4 per cent). Thus the negative trend in exports, in dollar terms, during the last one year has been reversed.

(b) It is the policy of the Government to promote export of agricultural commodities in a manner that domestic availability of items of mass consumption is not affected.

(c) The Government, as a policy are encouraging export of all non-traditional value-added items, including mushrooms, flowers and other western style fruits and vegetables, through increased production and productivity. Special emphas's is being laid for development of horticulture during 8th plan and increase in productivity has been identified as thrust area with application of modern techniques.

Set-Back to Rubber Exports

1642. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is fact that rubber exports have received a set back as reported in the Economic Times of 24th October, 1992;